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STATEMENT

BY

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I am honored to appear as the opening witness in your study of national security staffing and operations.

Until now my experience has been entirely in the Armed Services, and what I have to say this morning will be based on that experience. I have had the good fortune to participate in some interesting enterprises. When I was in the War Department shortly after the last war, I worked with one of the most distinguished military leaders of our time, the late Admiral Forrest Sherman, on a number of studies which helped to clear away some of the final obstacles to the reorganization of the Nation's military establishment in 1947. These studies included world-wide military command arrangements, roles and missions of the three services and finally the details of the agreement between the War and Navy Departments which was the basis or starting point of the Unification Act itself.

But an unusually large part of my experience has been overseas -- with American and Allied commands. Since I first put on uniform 37 years ago, more than half of my service has been abroad -- which may be a record of some sort -- and perhaps living and working far from our shores has given me a certain kind of perspective as it has many others who have shared this experience -- a perspective which is not necessarily better but one which comes from a slightly different angle.

An outstanding characteristic of the years since the Second World War has been the steadiness of purpose and action of the United States in building strength in the Free World. The Soviets have pursued their ambitions with determination. But they have encountered a will at least as firm as their own. The confrontation we call the cold war has, right from the start, involved a test of wills. On the outcome of this test depends in good degree the future of the freedom we hold dear.

For many years we were preoccupied with the weakness of Western Europe. For years to come we will be adjusting to the fact of its strength. In great part, the problems ahead -- and there are and will be great problems -- arise from the success of our policies. But I would far rather live with such problems than to be wrestling with the difficulties that would have grown out of continued European weakness.

Sometimes people talk as though success were a state of affairs in which there were no problems. But as I see it a successful country, like a successful man, will never see the day that does not bring a fresh quota of problems, and the mark of success is to deal with them effectively.

We learned some important lessons from World War II, and we have shown a capacity to go on learning. That is the important thing. I have no qualms about the future so long as we can examine the past coolly in order to improve our performance in the future.

Along with other democracies, we learned at great cost in the 30's that a foreign policy is no more impressive than the force that exists to back it up. It took us a long time to learn this elementary principle of international

affairs. Back in 1911 Admiral Mahan said to a Congressional Committee:

> It appears to me that the three functions of Government -- the diplomatic, the Army, and the Navy -- work now in what you might call watertight compartments.... It seems there is very little appreciation in the country of the relation between diplomacy and Army and Navy.... Our military and naval policy depends substantially upon what we conceive our relation to be with foreign countries, a forecast of the future, and what the probabilities of the future are.... I think what is very much needed in this country is to bring the three functions into necessary relation with one another.

In 1947, when Congress passed the National Security Act, creating the Department of Defense and the National Security Council, we took a substantial step in the direction indicated by Admiral Mahan in 1911.

The President has always had full authority over the Armed Services, and still does. No President, however, can give the management of military affairs the time the job requires. He needs a deputy who can. If we did not have a Secretary of Defense with authority, a President could, in times like the present, spend all of his energy dealing with military issues -- and still not get the job done.

It is sometimes said, I know, that the 1947 Act did not unify the Armed Services but instead further divided them. The charge does not stand up. The National Security Act with its amendments has created a strong Department of Defense and has given strength and authority to the Office of the Secretary of Defense. We can, we should, we do criticize when criticism is warranted but it seems to me that the <u>structure</u> of the military establishment permits us to have strong military services, balanced internally and in relation to one another, and all under the supervision, direction, and control provided for by law. If we sometimes have difficulties, what would be the situation, today, with all its complexities, if we had not taken the road to unification in 1947? It is hard to imagine, frightening to contemplate.

I have served in unified commands -- and although I know that you of this Committee appreciate the significance of this development, I do not believe that there is a full understanding in the country of the degree to which the services are now organized and operated according to the tasks to be performed and not according to the color of a man's uniform. Unified commands were, of course, established in World War II but the progress in this field, in the last ten or fifteen years, although it has been so quiet that many people have not noticed it, has in fact been quite dramatic.

The creation of the Department of Defense, the 1947 Reorganization Act and all that has flowed from it, have not only improved our military posture but have made it far easier to relate defense to national policy as a whole.

The creation of the National Security Council was another part of our national effort to learn and apply the lessons of the Second World War. Congress charged the Council with the task of advising the President

> with respect to the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies relating to the national security so as to enable the military services and the other departments and agencies of the Government to cooperate more effectively in matters involving the national security.

It is obvious that we have not always achieved a successful integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies. And I think this Committee is doing a most interesting and important work in studying our policy processes with a view to improving them. There is most certainly room for improvement, and some will consider this a notable understatement. But we should also keep in mind that the National Security Act of 1947 has served us well. On the whole our military establishment has effectively served our foreign policies and has meshed effectively with allied forces. The contrast with earlier periods -- the approach to World War II for instance -- is striking.

But you are interested in possible improvements. And here I would like to draw mainly on my NATO experience. Looking at the policy process in Washington from overseas, I have drawn a few conclusions that may be of interest to the Committee in its work.

(ONE) In thinking about problems of administration, too much attention tends to be paid to system and perhaps too little to men and their relationships. System is obviously important. But policy is not the product of a system. It is the product of responsible men who are in touch with one another.

A crisis highlights this fact, for it engages the attention of the highest authority and by stripping away the non-essential from the essential relationships, it identifies the men who are in fact his advisers and helpers, whatever the organization charts may say. Authority attracts authority. Responsible men attract responsible men around them. I have never known it to fail that when the going gets rough, responsible authorities are drawn to each other.

This is just as true and as necessary in allied relationships as in national. When one has command responsibilities, he feels a need to be in personal touch with key allied leaders. In a crisis, authority comes to have a very personal meaning, and one must go to the sources of authority before taking action. Things have to be done that way. A commander has got to know, of course, where the top political authorities stand, but more than this he must have a "feel" for their attitudes, a sense of their moods. A direct contact, therefore, is most useful.

At a time like the Cuban crisis last October the President, it seems to me, acts virtually as a commander, personally assuming direction of detailed operations on which depend peace and war. He is in frequent and intimate touch with his assistants in Washington and the field. And decisions are made as they go along.

Involving the highest authority in this degree of detail is, I suppose, a new departure. Certainly the President's title as Commander-in-Chief evokes a picture of larger and grander units than those with which he sometimes has to concern himself at the early stage of a serious development. We in the military service may sometimes feel that this is "getting into our business." But in my judgment the power and the speed we deal with today makes it necessary. At time of crisis, when the issue is peace or war, there is no substitute for direct, person-to-person relationships between the highest political and military authorities, and this inevitably involves the Commander-in-Chief, the President, in considerable detail.

A key factor is the quality of the relationships between the men who carry responsibility. No one can write directives fast enough to meet a crisis situation, like a Berlin or a Cuba. The man in the field may have to make decisions -- and it is essential that he be in direct contact with the political authorities. In terms of my own experience, the NATO machinery works but it can and should be improved in this respect. I have tried to suggest some ways in which this could be done. But the machinery is less important than the personal relationships that have been built up over the past 14 years among leaders in the allied countries.

I speak emphatically -- and freely -- on this subject because my own experience in this respect has been a most satisfactory one. My own work as Supreme Allied Commander Europe was made possible by the understanding and support of the leaders of the 14 countries with whom we are allied in NATO, and, when necessary, by direct contact with the President of the United States in the two Administrations under which I have served.

(TWO) The second point I wish to raise is really a question of definition. To say that any issue or policy -- economic, military, cultural or whatever -- which bears directly on our relations with other countries is essentially political will startle no one who has thought about the subject. Our military forces, for instance, serve political ends. The limits or constraints within which we act are political in nature -- as recent events in Europe eloquently demonstrate. The most powerful military force is helpless without the will to use it and the political ability to control and direct it.

One of our real problems in formulating policy at any level is that too many people become involved in it, with too many preconceived ideas, producing too many little policies.

Policy -- and here I speak of what we might call "grand policy" -- must be established at the top. That is the only way clarity as to our objectives can be achieved -- and without such clarity day-to-day decisions on this or that particular issue will lack focus and coherence. Moreover, the higher policy is made the less likely it is to be a pale concoction of warmed-over ideas. One of the things I have learned over the years is that the higher one's responsibilities, the less one can afford the luxury of preconceived ideas.

Grand policy, or national policy, can be coordinated in a Committee, a Board, or a Council but it cannot be developed there. Someone has to think through the problems and propose what our policy should be -- for consideration and decision at the highest level. In the foreign field, for example, Defense and other agencies make contributions, and proposals can and should be examined and debated in groups or committees. But the particular responsibility belongs to the Secretary of State and his associates. If this conclusion, because it is so obvious, falls short of being a notable one, perhaps we should ask ourselves whether our practice faithfully reflects it.

One sentence in the Committee's staff report struck home with great force. It is that "the nature of concrete policy issues and the character of governmental action processes push for a pragmatic one-thing-at-a-time-on-its-own-terms-approach" to policy making. And of course this is true. When a specific issue arises, we so often shop around for a solution to the problem in its own terms rather than in terms of our larger purposes.

Good staff work is supposed to insure the careful and broad look at a problem -- and we should gratefully take advantage of whatever help it can provide. Clarity at the top is probably a pre-condition to good staff work, for if your staff does not know what you are trying to accomplish, how can the staff advise you about the consequences of this or that particular decision?

But given a clear understanding of objectives, then a staff of knowledgeable persons, tuned to the political realities, who have developed over the years the ability to sense the full implications of a situation, can be extremely helpful.

(THREE) Another conclusion I have reached is that we Americans talk too much, especially when we are abroad. Paris was a good place to observe this phenomenon, for almost everyone came to Paris, sooner or later, and almost everyone had something to say.

It seemed to me that we sometimes spoke with too many voices. On a number of occasions important European officials asked me how seriously to take what appeared to be a statement of a new American position on a subject of interest to NATO, made by someone just off the plane from Washington. I could always say quite honestly that the American position remained as it had been stated to NATO bodies by the appropriate American representatives. Nevertheless, such episodes can lead to serious misunderstandings.

I think we should strictly follow the established procedures for making known the American position on policy questions.

In my experience, our officials who travel about the world saying that American policy is this or that rarely say it in exactly the same way. It comes out differently each time, and this is quite understandable.

It is a rather pleasant American habit, in some ways, to do our thinking out loud, but it is not a way to conduct affairs with other governments.

My own rule at SHAPE was to report facts but not to try to make news. In the first place, SHAPE was not supposed to be a policy-making organization, and I did not want it to be thought of as an important source of news. My public relations officers sometimes got a little impatient with me about this, but I am sure that had we talked more, it would have made it more difficult for us to do the jobs we were sent there to do.

We were able to speak with great frankness to allied governments, and when necessary to express sharp disappointment at their policies. We could do this because they knew the discussions were confidential and would not be spread all over the morning papers or even reported to other official agencies which had no need or right to such information. I think that we often accomplished a good deal because they were grateful that delicate matters were not aired too freely.

(FOUR) A closely-related point is that reappraisals of our policies should be made as quietly as possible. Of course, we must review our policies from time to time. A new Administration, for instance, certainly has an obligation to do so. I have always thought that it is useful to throw the policy papers away every so often, and re-examine things from the ground up. Unless one does this, the tendency is to work on producing a better mousetrap instead of asking whether a mousetrap is the best way to catch the mouse.

But it should be done privately. For as soon as one begins an analysis, reappraisal or reassessment, one attacks, or at least brings into question, the validity of one's plans, policies or strategy. And, furthermore, it may be that once the basic concepts are opened up for reassessment, one will find that some people want to go in one direction and others in exactly the opposite direction. This is especially true in dealings with allies. Some may want to reduce their commitments at the very time we think that their commitments ought to be increased. In that case reappraisals may become agonizing indeed.

I am afraid that we tend to involve too many people in such reassessments. There are too many Indians writing too many papers. The fewer the people, the better their product is likely to be. I once created a planning staff at SHAPE and assigned five colonels to it. It was a planning group that was all Chiefs and no Indians. The idea was to get fewer papers but a better product. Believe me, it worked.

(FIVE) The last point I want to raise is that we should make a deliberate effort to develop our most promising talent.

A good man is still hard to find. When we find one with judgment and courage, with intellect and intuitiveness, we should do everything we can to bring him along fast, to put him in situations where he can develop -- especially situations where he is called upon to carry responsibilities at least as heavy as he can carry, even a little heavier.

I remember that back in the 30's a lieutenant I knew received a promotion to captain. He had been a lieutenant for almost 20 years. I congratulated him, but did not get a warm response and asked him why he wasn't happier about his

promotion. I will never forget his reply. He said: "Norstad, don't you know that a man who has been a lieutenant for 20 years will always be a lieutenant?"

When we find a good man, therefore, we ought to push him ahead rapidly, even if this means some preferential treatment. For men grow when they have to make decisions and carry responsibility.

I might also add that we should make every effort to build up and give support to our officials, civilian and military, who serve in allied groups. I am not talking about press-agent techniques, but about the marks of confidence and support that say much more about personal trust and reliance.

We want our officials in allied groups to have influence and to be effective advocates of our interests. There is no better way to help them than to show that they have influence in our own counsels and have the respect and confidence of the men for whom they work.

Finally, the tasks of national security, I believe, may well be more complex and demanding today than ever before. Foreseeing as early as 1946 our basic dilemma, Henry Stimson said these wise words:

> The sinfulness and weakness of man are evident to anyone who lives in the active world. But men are also good and great, kind and wise. Honor begets honor; trust begets trust; faith begets faith; and hope is the mainspring of life. I have lived with the reality of war, and I have praised soldiers; but the hope of honorable, faithful peace is a greater thing, and I have lived with that, too. That a man must live with both together is inherent in the nature of our present stormy stage of human progress, but it has also many times been the nature of progress in the past, and it is not reason for despair.

The choices before us are profoundly difficult and they lie within firmly fixed limits: we must devise the means that will discourage and prevent war with its terrible destructiveness, but we cannot weaken the guarantees of freedom, we cannot forfeit the means of defending the future of our nation and of the individual liberty without which we could not live.